



Sustainable Monocacy Commission
Thursday, May 25, 2023, at 6:30 p.m.
Winchester Hall, 3rd Floor Meeting Room
12 East Church Street, Frederick, MD

MINUTES

Members present: Gary Magnuson (Chair), Andy Celmer (Vice Chair), Bill Allen, Chuck Eirkson, Matt Moran, Kimberly Stewart, FCC President Brad Young

County Staff: Andrew Stine

Guest Speakers: Don Dorsey (Division of Energy and the Environment Stormwater Department Head), Suzanne Cliber (Division of Energy & Environment Program Specialist), Kristin Mielcarek (Division of Energy & Environment Grants Manager)

The Sustainable Monocacy Commission's May 25, 2023, meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

Chair Gary Magnuson opened the meeting with a review of the April 27, 2023, meeting minutes. With no corrections noted by the Members present, Gary called for a motion to approve the April 27, 2023, meeting minutes. Matt Moran made a motion for approval that was seconded by Kim Stewart. Unanimous approval.

Prior to the discussion of any business, Chuck Eirkson inquired about possible alternatives for distribution of meeting materials due to postage costs associated with the mailings. Staff indicated that distribution solely by email was a possibility and that additional options could be investigated and presented at a future meeting.

After an introduction by Gary, Don Dorsey, Division of Energy and the Environment Stormwater Department Head, provided the Commission with a brief history of the Clean Water Act and a full description of the Frederick County Division of Energy and the Environment's administration of the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) compliance program in Frederick County as required under the federal Clean Water Act (CWA). The presentation also addressed the ways in which the Stormwater Department works to improve water quality within the Monocacy River watershed. Suzanne Cliber, Division of Energy & Environment Program Specialist, provided the Commission with a presentation outlining the history and outreach efforts associated with the Monocacy and Catoctin Watershed Alliance, including the alliance's 17-year history and its work in facilitating partnerships to further conservation efforts within the Monocacy River watershed. The Commission was also introduced to Kristin Mielcarek, Division of Energy & Environment Grants Manager, who provided a brief overview

of the grants process that helps secure funding for the projects implemented by the Division of Energy & Environment.

The next item the Commission addressed was the term renewal of Gary Magnuson, Bill Allen and Matt Moran. Gary asked for a motion to accept the County Executive's approval of the renewal of Gary, Bill and Matt's tenures on the Commission. Kim made a motion to accept the County Executive's recommendation that was seconded by Chuck Eirkson. A call of the roll resulted in unanimous approval with Council President Young abstaining as an Ex-Officio member.

Next, the Commission addressed the 2023 Monocacy River Report. Matt Moran requested a revision to the 2nd paragraph on Page 5 to address formatting of the list of threats to the Monocacy Scenic River and Watershed. These corrections being adequately noted by Staff, Matt made a motion that the Commission formally approve the 2023 Monocacy River Report. Bill Allen seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

The Commission then held a discussion of legislative policy review, with the intent of identifying the best way to stay informed of County policies or projects that may affect the health of the Monocacy River. Council President Young indicated that staff in the Council's office may be able to assist in identifying and forwarding legislation to the Commission that may have impacts on the watershed and that issues related to zoning and land use may be best addressed at the level of the Planning Commission. Andrew Stine stated that Livable Frederick staff are routinely informed of rezoning and land development projects, and that planning staff should be able to forward agendas to Commission members for Planning Commission meetings that may address issues of interest to the Sustainable Monocacy Commission.

Gary Magnuson shared information with the Commission regarding the June 3rd Clean-Up event being held in partnership with River Rescue. Gary stated that he will be coordinating with Frederick County Division Public Works, Department of Highway Operations, regarding supplies and will be coordinating with that agency for removal of items collected during the clean-up.

The Commission next addressed the April 27, 2023, presentation of Heather Hutchinson, District Manager of the Frederick and Catoctin Soil Conservation Districts. Andy Celmer and Bill Allen summarized the staffing issue raised by Heather during her presentation and indicated that this issue is leading to a backlog in the writing of conservation plans for Frederick County farmers. The lack of a conservation plan was also identified as a barrier to the application for farm grants that could potentially help farmers provide cover cropping, fencing, and other measures that can help address water quality within the Monocacy River Watershed. The Commission unanimously agreed that this issue may warrant additional discussion and should be addressed prior to the County's commencement of the 2024 budget process in September.

Kimberly Stewart provided an update for the Outreach Subcommittee report. Those Commission members able to attend the June 3, 2023, Clean-Up event hope to take photos and interview participants, when possible, to generate content for sharing via social media. Commission members may also make independent visits to access points with the intent of collecting feedback from the public that

can be shared via social media platforms. Gary Magnuson will distribute materials recently released by the Lake Linganore Association that contain information that could be helpful in facilitating discussions with the public as part of outreach measures. Gary also requested that Staff investigate the potential for one or more student members to receive and Ex-Officio nomination to the Commission to encourage youth participation.

A discussion was also held regarding distribution of the approved 2023 Monocacy River report. Staff indicated that online distribution would be the first priority, and other measures would be investigated for report back to the Commission.

Following completion of agenda items, the Commission moved on to Member/Public Comments.

Chuck Eirkson asked about the updates to the Scenic River Trails map and measures the Commission might be able to take to accelerate distribution of the current stock of printed maps. Members indicated that they may individually pick up maps from the Parks and Recreation Department for dissemination at various outlets in the County. It was acknowledged that an enhanced distribution effort that would ultimately result in the need for new maps to be printed that depict the additional access points added in the Commission's recently approved access map. Staff did note that the updated Scenic River Trails maps should be available online.

Gary Magnuson highlighted the recent release of the Potomac Conservancy's 2023 Report Card for the Potomac River and the assigned grade of "B." Gary also stated that he is in communication with the Conservancy regarding the release of the University of Maryland's Report Card on June 6, 2023. More information on the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science's report card will follow as Gary and the Potomac Conservancy continue to track its release to the public.

Council President Young mentioned that upcoming Frederick County 275th Anniversary Jubilee in Utica Park on June 10, 2023. He stated that this may be an opportunity for the Commission to reach a broad sector of the public within Frederick County.

With no other business, Gary Magnuson suggested adjournment. Bill Allen made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Matt seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8:17 p.m.